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Protracted conflicts in the GUAM area and their implications for international peace, security and development

The situation in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan

Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba

Security Council
Seventy-first year

Letter dated 21 November 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I would like to draw your attention to the allegations made by the Republic of Armenia in its written communication for the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba" (A/71/91).

Thus, in a false expression of solidarity and in an effort to climb on the bandwagon, Armenia has tried to attach itself to the overwhelming and consistent international support for Cuba simply in order to accuse Azerbaijan and another regional country of "a continuing blockade" allegedly imposed against it.

This is not the first striking example of preposterous methods employed by Armenia in its senseless attempts to mislead the international community and deny its responsibility for apparent non-compliance with the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

The first question that arises in this connection is why Armenia has resorted to the above-mentioned allegation, which is absurd in substance and irrelevant owing to its inclusion in its written communication for the report of the Secretary-General on Cuba, instead of introducing its own "case" to the General Assembly or the Security Council.

The reason for such inconsistency and caution is obvious. There is no blockade of Armenia at all.

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The total disruption of all relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan, including economic, transport and energy links, is a direct consequence of Armenia's continuing aggression against Azerbaijan and its military occupation of its territories. Obviously, with its policy of aggression and territorial claims towards its neighbours, Armenia bears sole responsibility for isolating itself from full-fledged regional cooperation and for the current dire economic situation facing the country.

In its resolutions 822 (1993), 853 (1993), 874 (1993) and 884 (1993), the Security Council condemned the use of force against Azerbaijan and the occupation of its territories, reaffirmed respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and the inviolability of its international borders, and demanded the immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of the Armenian occupying forces from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan.

In the above-mentioned resolutions, the Security Council clearly conditioned the restoration of economic, transport and energy links in the region on the immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of the Armenian occupying forces from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan.

However, the aforementioned key Security Council demands have still not been implemented by Armenia. Moreover, Armenia's annexationist claims and uninterrupted efforts towards further consolidating the current status quo of the occupation and preventing the return of hundreds of thousands of Azerbaijani internally displaced persons to their homes and properties represent an open challenge to the conflict-settlement process and a serious threat to international and regional peace and security.

In fact, the Armenian side, including at the highest political level, has also accepted that settlement of the conflict and respect for international law are the necessary preconditions for enabling economic cooperation. Thus, for example, the joint declaration signed by the Presidents of Armenia, Azerbaijan and the Russian Federation on 2 November 2008, at Meiendorf Castle, the Russian Federation, inter alia, states that signatories will work towards a political settlement of the conflict on the basis of the principles and norms of international law and the resolutions and documents adopted in this framework, which will create favourable conditions for economic development and all-encompassing cooperation in the region.

International economic relations are governed by the fundamental principles of sovereign equality of States, non-aggression and respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States.

In the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Heads of State and Government and High Representatives emphasized in particular that the Agenda was to be implemented in a manner that is consistent with the rights and obligations of States under international law and reaffirmed the need to respect the territorial integrity and political independence of States.

The Republic of Azerbaijan has successfully developed its cooperation with regional and global partners and has either initiated or actively promoted a number of very large transregional transportation and energy projects, the implementation of which contributes considerably to the sustainable economic growth of Azerbaijan and other countries in the region and beyond.

I should be grateful if you could have the present letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under the agenda items 32, 37 and 39, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Yashar **Aliyev**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative